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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. "In early Jul 53 I arrived in Burgas from my native village in County Elkhovo to look for work.
2. "At the Burgas bus depot I was alone. I knew no one. The town was strange to me, and I did not know where to turn. I had with me 10 leva, bread and some cheese. I spent the night at the railroad station where there were many people like me. Nobody checked our papers.
3. "The next day a fellow stopped me who had known me in the army. We went to a cafe, drank boza and ate cakes. I told him that I was looking for a job. He told me that they wanted workers at the Strojobiedinenie enterprise. He had worked there but had left because the job was too heavy and did not pay enough money to support him. It was out of the question to buy a suit. Another worker from that enterprise then entered the cafe. We talked together and the man suggested that I apply for a job and possibly work with him. I agreed.
4. "About 8 PM we entered a workers' collective settlement (obsztezitie) of the Strojobiedinenie enterprise. My new friend lived there. He took me to the man in charge (ekonom) (domakin). He asked me if I wanted to work for them. I said yes. He took my passport and kept asking me all sorts of questions. He permitted me to spend the night in the collective settlement and retained my passport.
5. "I was taken inside. The workers' settlement was a brick barracks with several rooms. My friend lived in a room about three meters wide and six-seven meters long. It had two levels of beds, seven on each level. The beds had straw mattresses, blankets, straw pillows and sheets. The room had two chairs. There were six people in the room that night; I was the seventh. The entire barrack was occupied by Strojobiedinenie workers who were building a house for sailors.

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- 2 -

6. "Before 8 a.m. my friend took me to the enterprise offices in town and introduced me to a foreman (Kadrowik). He asked me where I was from, whether I belonged to Dimitrov Youth Organization (the Communist Youth Organization). I told him that I had belonged before joining the Army but was a member no longer. He asked me whether my father was in a collective farm. I said that he was but that I wasn't. He drew my attention to the fact that I did not have a note from the director of the collective farm and was anxious to know whether they would come after me. I reassured him that they would not. He asked me how long I wanted to work. I said three months. He suggested that I sign a three months' contract, to which I agreed. He read the text of the contract to me. It said that I was supposed to follow work discipline, look after the tools, and not destroy materials. It said that I would be put on trial should I do anything wrong. I signed the paper. He told me that after a few days I would get paid. He then took my passport, entered something in it and put a seal under it. He handed the passport back to me and gave me a piece of paper for the director of works in the project where I was to be employed. I got one copy of my contract.
7. "I went out towards the project with my friend, but he met another friend on the way and I lost him. I did not know where to look for the project, so I went to the workers' settlement and called upon the head man. He examined my passport and my contract and told me that he had to get me a workers' book (Trudova Knizka) and that I would go to work the next day. After 5 p.m. the others came back from work. I was told that the next day I was to move to live near the project.
8. "The next morning a horse and buggy arrived. We loaded four beds with blankets etc. Three workers and I walked besides the buggy for about half an hour. We got for the four of us a room freshly finished near our project.
9. "We worked digging foundations for a building. We were paid according to our performances: 2.80 leva for excavating and moving one square meter of earth for a distance of about 20 meters. We worked from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with an hour break for lunch. We fed ourselves with bread, tomato or cheese. Tomatoes cost at that time (Jul 53) 0.80 leva per kg. A man called Bobi, young and pleasant, was assigning and checking our work.
10. "The Kadronwnik promised that I would get paid soon. I was penniless and had nothing to eat. I was being promised day after day that I would get some money but days were passing and I was getting nothing. Twice I went to the offices, where I was stalled off. Finally after ten days we got some pay. I had to go to the office to get a paper stating how much I had made. With that paper I had to go to the director who signed it and put on a seal, then to another official who checked once more and signed. Only after this procedure could I go to the cashier. He asked me to sign on a payroll list and explained to me that the bachelor's tax and other taxes had been deducted. I received 170 leva as an advance on my pay. The cashier warned me that I would not get anything more until the final settlement at the end of the month and that I should economize. At the end of the month I got the remaining 90 leva. I calculated that I made enough money to eat with but nothing was left over. We worked on Sundays, but two Sundays of the month were free.
11. "One of these Sundays I went to Burgas and ate in a restaurant four hamburgers and a slice of bread, for which I paid 0.40 leva. I could afford to live only on bread and such things as tomatoes, nothing else.

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- 3 -

12. "I worked several more days. Someone from our village came and brought me a letter which I gave my foreman to read for me [source is illiterate]. I thought it was a letter from my parents. The foreman read and said, 'My boy, you have to give up your work right now and return home. This letter is from the chairman of your collective, who says that you have no right to work anywhere else'. I begged him to let me continue working, but he refused. Then I asked him to pay me the rest due me. He answered that not only was nothing due me, but that I had taken over 150 leva which I should return. I did not have that money and I could not understand how that was possible. He said that I must pay him that money - if I didn't he would refuse to write in my passport when I finished my work and would not affix the seal. Without that entry no one would give me work.
13. "I did not even have money for my return trip, but since it was the harvest time I worked for ten days in neighboring villages. Friends suggested that I go back home since the collective chairman wanted me; otherwise I would run into trouble. Finally I managed to collect enough money for a bus trip to Elkhovo.
14. "There is a small waiting room in the bus depot in Burgas. Tickets are sold at the window. The bus was crowded. A militia patrol checked documents in the bus in the vicinity of the village of Kruszewo. [sic]. Otherwise no documents were checked. I returned to my village."

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